



# MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

**Meeting Date:** May 28, 2020

**Agenda Item:** Placid Lake Emergency Fishing Regulation (R2)

**Action Needed:** Final

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 10 minutes

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**Background:** A Northern Pike was captured in Placid Lake on May 8 during routine FWP monitoring surveys. The population density of Northern Pike is currently unknown, but the lake contains habitats preferred by Northern Pike and the department believes there is a high risk of population expansion in the lake. The lake contains popular Kokanee, Largemouth Bass, and Westslope Cutthroat Trout fisheries, as well as populations of native fishes including migratory Bull Trout, that would all be negatively impacted by a self-sustaining Northern Pike population.

To gain additional information on the Northern Pike population, FWP is proposing mandatory catch, kill, report, and turn in regulations for Northern Pike in Placid Lake. Similar regulations have been implemented for unauthorized introduction of Northern Pike in Lake Mary Ronan, Walleye in Swan Lake, and Brown Trout in the Kootenai River below Libby Dam. Data collected from fish captured by anglers would be used to assess the source of the fish (i.e., reproduced in the lake, swimming into the lake via the Clearwater River or unauthorized introduction) and population size and viability. This information is valuable in planning appropriate management responses. Edible portions of the fish may be returned to the angler upon request. Rules associated with unauthorized placement of fish provides guidance on FWP response to discovery of unauthorized introductions and instituting mandatory catch and kill is one of the identified management actions (ARM 12.7.1503). The department will also continue to evaluate whether additional management actions are needed to prevent population expansion of Northern Pike in the lake.

**Public Involvement Process & Results:** This proposal is in response to the finding of Northern Pike in Placid Lake. No public process for this proposal occurred prior to the commission meeting. The presence of Northern Pike was just documented on May 8, precluding proposed changes at an earlier commission meeting and accommodating full public process.

**Alternatives and Analysis:** With no action, the Department will lack data needed for determining appropriate management actions. The proposed regulation is expected to allow FWP to collect additional data to determine population status and possible origin.

**Agency Recommendation and Rationale:** FWP recommends approving mandatory kill, report, and turn-in regulations for Northern Pike in Placid Lake. The proposed regulation falls under Unauthorized Placement of Fish Administrative Rule (ARM 12.7.1501-1505) and uses anglers as a tool to manage unauthorized species through harvest and provides FWP the means to collect additional population data.

**Proposed Motion:** I move the commission approve a mandatory kill, report, and turn-in fishing regulation for Northern Pike for Placid Lake.